

# Montana Prevention Coalition Communication Post

January, 2016

PREVENTION AT WORK IN MONTANA

BOYD ANDREW  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES



## Chemical Dependency Bureau News

*By Billy Reamer, CDB Prevention Program Manager*

Montana prevention has seen its fair share of changes in the past. I was recently reviewing a “History of Prevention” document being put together by our Prevention Fellow Kenzie Antila and I couldn’t help but notice that we have come a long way in our ability to have positive impacts in our communities. This is further made clear when you look at our 30-day use rates across Montana.

As we begin migrating towards a public health model in Montana and across the country, changes are needed. This model requires community level collaboration that begins first, with assessing and prioritizing local needs by conducting school and community surveys of risk and protective factors (primarily PNA and YRBS). This then becomes the data that will drive all prevention efforts within the community. Prevention must be data driven and interventions must coincide with the needs of the community.

The process of assessing and collecting data directly links to prioritizing community risk and protective factors, and focusing efforts on areas of need with proven preventive interventions. This collaborative approach is dependent on building capacity in order to target risk and protective factors in the community so that reaching solutions becomes a shared responsibility.

Success will be measureable but in order for this to work, communities must set goals to reach and actively monitor those goals to see if interventions are working. Three important questions a community needs to answer are: What is the community need? What is the vision for the future? How can the vision be achieved?

The process to answering these questions using high quality community collaboration is through the use of Logic Models. The Prevention Specialists will help the community to use the data to guide community wide prevention planning matching the community needs with suitable evidence-based interventions. The logic model becomes the roadmap for your community. Logic Models help to keep us on point and create interventions that are effective, culturally significant, and sustainable.

Be assured, as we begin the process, we will be providing one-to-one technical assistance. The current prevention plans are a great launching pad and we will walk you through how to transfer your good work to a logic model. The work you have been doing is great and we want you to continue to be successful in your efforts while working collaboratively in your communities. These changes will help support increased community support and engagement with enhanced fidelity. Lastly, remember that you are not alone in your

The remainder of this month’s Communication Post is dedicated almost entirely to the coalition building and coalition sustaining efforts in Lincoln County. Prevention staff from Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency Clinic Vel Shaver and Maggie Anderson put a lot of effort into covering many aspects of the all important local coalition as the agent of change. This is going to be especially valuable to our newer preventionists.~~



## Coalition Building

### *Lessons Learned Along the Way*

*By Vel Shaver and Maggie Anderson of the Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency Clinic*

When Dan McGoldrick approached us about sharing our experiences with building the Lincoln County Unite for Youth Coalition, we were honored that he would ask and excited to have the opportunity to share a bit of what we have learned and continue to learn along the way - not only about the basic fundamentals of coalition building, but also about the complexity of human behavior and the need to seek out and honor the diverse perspectives and valuable insights individuals bring to the table when we work together to create strong, safe and healthy communities. When we began our work in 2008, we claimed the adage "It's Takes a Village to Raise a Child". Today, we recognize more than ever how true that statement is if we ever hope to achieve positive sustainable changes in youth substance use.

For those of you just setting out on this journey, brace yourselves for the steep learning curve that accompanies this work. At the same time, please know that in time it all begins to make sense - truly. You are not alone. Ask questions, reach out for help when you need it and access one of the most amazing, important and valuable resources we have ... our fellow prevention workers. This phenomenal group of individuals represents a plethora of knowledge, heart and perseverance!

We have learned (sometimes the hard way) that healthy conflict arises as we begin to examine the root causes of unhealthy behaviors and disrupt the status quo in our individual communities. Remember, conflict is **key** to change and often the only way to identify and reveal the truth of why problems exist in the first place. If we are willing to stay the course and work through the conflict, what we find on the other side is a renewed sense of purpose and confidence in our own ability and the ability of the coalition to move this work forward. As time goes on, you may accidentally step on a beehive, but learning and growing along the way will make you much more willing to intentionally kick it down (who in their right mind would do that? Oh yea, that's right - prevention workers).

Many times we had to be our own cheerleaders in this work, but we kept showing up (that's what prevention workers do, right?). We kept speaking the same message in hopes of creating a safe place for community members to express their concerns for the wellness of our community and share ideas to create an action plan that would build a safety net around our children. Eventually there was security in expressing those concerns and people began to take notice. Someone stepped up and echoed the message and that gave courage for others to do the same. Before we knew it, a small group of like-minded community members were speaking the same language - the language of prevention - the language of shifting community norms! UFY started with a handful of people and has grown into a fully functioning non-profit organization with 15 active Board Members, 15 Sector Reps and a body of 50-100 community members that routinely attend community events!

Don't lose sight of the fact that at times, this work makes us feel like we are going two steps forward and one step back, but forward or backward, we are always moving...one foot in front of the other. The work is fluid and always evolving. We see ourselves as "Hopeful Realists" and we have learned some valuable lessons along the way that continually work to inform next steps. By sharing our story, we hope to offer at least a nugget of information or support that may be of help to you as you are building your own coalitions. What we know to be true about ourselves (and Prevention Specialists in general) is, we **are Encouragers** and we **Believe** that if we keep community health and safety at the center of the table and work together to accomplish our shared vision, healthy, sustainable community- level change **is Possible** - we've witnessed it!

"This work calls us to take the hard road and the hard road  
is most often the right road."

~Brent Faulkner, Lincoln County Undersheriff



# Lincoln County Unite for Youth

*Together... Reducing Youth Substance Use for a Strong, Safe and Healthy Community!*

## A Little History...

In 2007, the Surgeon General issued a Call to Action to reduce and prevent the devastating effects of underage drinking (UAD). At that time, Montana ranked #1 in the Nation for this statistic and Lincoln County youth ranked number 5.

In 2008, following the US Surgeon General's Call to Action, a cross-representation of the Lincoln County community (parents, youth, educators, law enforcement and criminal justice officials, social service representatives, health care professionals, and community groups including Rotary, Chamber of Commerce and Lincoln County Business Professionals) gathered together for a presentation sponsored by *The Montana Community Change Project*.

The presentation focused on youth binge drinking and drinking and driving across the lifespan in Lincoln County and compared it with state and national averages. The evening's presentation was

followed by a call to action. *Every* person in the room not only heard the call – they agreed to be a part of a local strategy team, learn more about the problem and advocate for community level change.

In 2009, the strategy team became the Lincoln County Unite for Youth Coalition (UFY) and, under the direction of SAMSHA and the Institute for Public Strategies (IPS) was trained in the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Model.

Coalition members focused their attention on identifying the *causal factors* that were leading to or sustaining the problems of binge drinking and drinking and driving in Lincoln County (Social Availability due to low perception of risk of both harm and of getting caught by police, Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Alcohol Use, Retail Availability and Inconsistent Citation and Adjudication of Alcohol-related Offenses).

## Raising Concern and The Call to Action

*Lincoln County - 2008*

*The age of first use of alcohol was 10.5*

*42.8 percent of HS seniors reported binge drinking in the past two weeks*

*Lincoln County lost three young people to alcohol-related crashes in the previous 18 months.*

*Nearly 40 percent of youth in grades 8-12 reported riding in a car with someone who had been drinking.*

*Lincoln County experienced one alcohol-related crash every 8.5 days*

*"Adolescent alcohol use is not an acceptable rite of passage, but a serious threat to adolescent development and health." – Surgeon General*

## Hope... A Vision for the Future

As important as it was to recognize deeply-rooted norms and attitudes of acceptance around youth substance use, it was equally important to acknowledge community and individual resources primed and ready to create positive community-level change.

Coalition members committed to creating a hopeful vision of a safe and healthy community where youth and families could thrive. They focused on building strong relationships with key stakeholders and

understood the importance of growing awareness of the scope and magnitude of the problems we faced as a community.

As awareness began to grow, so did expectation and support for RASS Training, High-Visibility Compliance Checks, Consistent Citation and Adjudication of Alcohol-related Offenses and Community Event Policy Changes – strategies shown to shift community norms in a safe and healthy direction.





# Creating the Foundation

## Building the Board Structure

When Lincoln County Unite for Youth Coalition was awarded the Drug Free Communities Support Grant in 2012, one of our first action steps was to attend CADCA's Coalition Academy – a three-week training focused on the fundamentals of building an effective coalition.

We walked away understanding the relationship of a strong organizational structure to long-term sustainability and were determined to create a solid Board Structure as the first step to insuring transparency and the credibility needed to achieve our long-term goal of 501c3 non-profit status.

Being careful to select a cross representation of individuals seen as effective leaders within the

community has added to the credibility and transparency of the coalition.

As of 2015, UFY has an established 15 seat Board of Directors, Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation are in place and 501c3 Status has been obtained.

As a body, the Board was willing early on, to "stand in the gap" for UFY. Forward progress was hindered due to our Fiscal Agent's fundamental misunderstanding of the goals and objectives of UFY and the process and procedures required by the DFC grant.

Board members provided insight and support as they advocated for conflict resolution and assisted in UFY's smooth transition to a new Fiscal Agent – Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. The process resulted in a broader vision and support for community-level prevention efforts.



### Why Say Yes?

*"I got tired of having too much competition for kids' attention and their time. The partying, the drug and alcohol use... it was just overwhelming. I decided to do something about it. I knew this organization was there – it was time for me to find out more about it."*

~ Jim May - Educator, UFY Board

**Watch Our Video Here!!!**

PASSWORD: UNITE

<https://vimeo.com/112145901>

## UFY Board Members Agree...Invest in the Protective Power of Parents!



### Lincoln County – 2008

*34 percent of students in grades 8-12 reported having a conversation about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and/or drug use in the last year...*

*"What parents may not realize is that children say parental disapproval of underage drinking is the key reason they have chosen not to drink."*

~ Charles Currie, SAMHSA

### Bonding \* Boundaries \* Monitoring

Utilize Town Hall Meetings, Workforce Trainings, School Newsletters, Health Fairs, Print Ads, Opinion Editorials, and Newspaper, and Radio and Theatre PSA's to teach parents, caregivers and mentors about child and brain development promote strategies shown to prevent youth substance use!

Family Dinners ~ the 5 W's ~ Clear Expectations  
Meaningful Consequences

## GOOD LUCK ASHLY!

Our dear colleague and friend Ashly Holland is leaving Montana to pursue her first love, **Music**.

She has been part of our prevention team for the past eight years, working hard in Park, Meagher, and Broadwater counties for South West Chemical Dependency Program. At the same time, she put together a band and lived her dream of teaching RASS classes during the day and performing music at night riding her "hog" to classes and gigs. Her move will allow her to focus just on her music and finally record her first album – I am sure not the last one. I guess the California sun is calling her away.

Ashly, we will miss your infectious smile, great attitude, and willingness to assist all of in MDS entry. Don't forget to love your data wherever you land!!

~Keep in Touch.







*A team of Parents, Educators, Youth, Business and Medical Professionals, Youth Serving Organizations, Faith Community, Law Enforcement and Treatment Professionals, Prevention Specialists, Civic and Volunteer Groups partnering to reducing youth substance use through collaborative community prevention strategies.*

### A Collective Response

Effective prevention campaigns require a collective response that focuses not only on individual behaviors, but also on community norms and standards.

Partner organizations represent the local perspective and may connect a wide range of individuals with prevention services and materials by distributing targeted messages, hosting information sessions, and/or promoting healthy youth and family activities.

Community partners may provide or promote training opportunities, support local law enforcement efforts, advocate for consistent citation and adjudication and help to inform and advance public policy.

Partnering in this way requires a willingness to do things differently. It involves understanding that youth substance use is harmful, and rejecting the assumption that it is a "rite of passage". It involves examination of community norms through a variety of lenses and perspectives. Most of all, it involves imagining a better way, and working together to accomplish lasting change.

### Building The Team

The Drug Free Community Model emphasizes the importance of including a broad range of

"authentic community voices" - community members representing a variety of experiences, perspectives, skills and connections and have their "finger on the pulse" of community norms, attitudes and readiness for change.

### Capacity

Take time to teach the basics. Dedicate part of every coalition meeting to relationship and capacity building. Allowing coalition members to get to know each other on a more personal level, providing the opportunity to learn along the way and being purposeful about recognizing and celebrating even the smallest win will work together to create a more confident, capable coalition willing to support each other in the often difficult work of prevention.

*"When we know better, we do better"\**

Whatever phase of coalition building you may be in, remember, less than perfect attempts to implement a plan are really just opportunity to reflect and reframe. In fact, we have learned this is a necessary part of coalition building. Allow time to evaluate and talk with each other about what worked, what didn't work and what can we do to make it even better next time? Experience, outcomes and ongoing evaluation continually guide UFY's next steps.

*\*Maya Angelou (above)*

## COALITIONS KNOW HOW TO AND DO

### LOOK BACK BEFORE MOVING FORWARD!

*Create a data  
collection plan*

*Analyze your  
Contributions*

*Report your progress to  
Key Stakeholders*

*Appreciate, Appreciate,  
Appreciate!*

*Celebrate Often  
Recognize out loud!*

### READINESS REALLY MATTERS!

*Implement evidence  
based programs,  
practices and policies*

### BUT REMEMBER

*Implementation relies  
on OTHER PEOPLE  
DOING what you are  
asking...*

*Involve them first!*

### PERCEPTIONS ARE POWERFUL!

*When there is a gap between perception and  
reality, we have work to do!*

*Assess Community Needs and Resources  
Analyze problems and goals*

*Access UFY's Community Perception Survey Here!*

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1M716G5lTNavorTKoDl06Q3b4UmNVEbbIrEQoFSd-U1Y/viewform?c=0&w=1&usp=mail\\_form\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1M716G5lTNavorTKoDl06Q3b4UmNVEbbIrEQoFSd-U1Y/viewform?c=0&w=1&usp=mail_form_link)

### FOUNDATIONS FIRST!

*Recruit from the 12  
Sectors*

*Develop a Shared  
Leadership Plan*

*Build, Learn, Grow!*

*Media Advocacy,  
Culture of Poverty,  
ACES, Risk/Protective  
Factors , Current  
Trends and Prevention  
101*

### WHAT'S THE PLAN??

*Develop a strategic  
plan that includes  
policies, programs and  
practices*

*Create a logical data-  
driven plan to address  
problems identified in  
assessment*

*Engage Key  
Stakeholders*

*Advocate for Change!*



### SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND

*Meet people where they are  
Listen*

*Be willing to "do for" and "do with" before you  
have the privilege of "cheering them on"!*

**OUR BEST ADVISE.... JUST KEEP SWIMMING... REALLY!**



*For even better advise, check out SPF Primers at [cadca.org/resources](http://cadca.org/resources) ... Really!*



# Lincoln County Unite for Youth

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## 2016 Work Groups

### Underage Drinking

Alcohol continues to be the drug of choice for Lincoln County Youth. UFY is conducting a county-wide community perception survey and will follow up with focus groups and one-on-one interviews, problem identification, updated logic model and action plans.

### Rx Drug Abuse

In collaboration with FVCDC and the Partnership Grant, UFY will conduct community presentation, employee assistance and workforce trainings around recognizing signs and symptoms of Rx abuse. Coalition members will participate in a statewide round table with AG's office, organize drug take-back days and will organize a Town Hall and Community Forum with Jermaine Galloway in October.

### Misdemeanor Probation

This broad-sector committee will gather applicable data, research Treatment Court feasibility and begin the formation of a Coordinated Community

Response Team. They will develop a timeline for implementation, conduct roundtable discussions and build community awareness and support.

### Motivational

### Interviewing (MI)

UFY's health care sector is working to address one of the biggest challenges practitioners face - helping people change longstanding behaviors that pose significant health risks. MI provides opportunities for providers to engage with patients in ways that increase their rate of success at changing harmful behaviors (such as alcohol and prescription drug use). Engaging in early conversations and intervening/referring when necessary has been shown to reduce risk and prevent harm.

### Media Team

The media will continue to focus on building countywide awareness for reducing risk factors, increasing protective factors leading to or sustaining the problems we face as a community around of UAD and Rx drug abuse.

## The Good News and Emerging Trends

### Lincoln County - 2014

*The age of first use increased 13.9 percent*

*Percent of HS seniors reported binge drinking in the past two weeks has decreased 9 percent*

*Youth in grades 8-12 reported riding in a car with someone who had been drinking decreased 24 percent*

*Percent of youth in grades 8-12 reported having a conversation about the dangers of alcohol and/or drugs with a parent has increased 39 percent*

### *Of particular concern...*

*Youth reporting using a Rx drug without a prescription has tripled since 2010.*

## A Community Vision

UFY Board and Coalition members identified the community's need to dig a little deeper and focus on some of the root issues leading to or sustaining youth substance use in Troy, Libby and Eureka. Generational Poverty has been identified as the dominant culture in Lincoln County and UFY is committed to creating a support system for both youth and families struggling to exist in this culture and the individuals/agencies working to provide education and resources to families in need. UFY has hosted two Generational Poverty workshops with more than 200

community members in attendance. Natural partnerships have evolved as a result and we are excited about the possibilities that lay ahead. Lincoln County Job Service, HECLA Mining Company and Libby Public Schools are working with UFY to lay the foundation for a Community Resource and Workforce Center aimed at identifying community needs and gaps in current systems while growing awareness of community resources and connecting youth and families with what they need to achieve a safe and healthy future.

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## Powerful Partnerships

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### Relationships are Key to Collaboration

We can't say enough about the importance and power of developing and maintaining healthy, trusting and supportive relationships within the community. Aligning with partners that have a similar vision of healthy community makes perfect sense, *and* it's another way to add to transparency and credibility to your coalition work, as well as add potential for contributions of resources, whether In-Kind, Match or Monetary.

### Thank you Mike!

Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency Clinic has been a consistent supporter of the Unite for Youth Coalition from day one! Early on, *FVCDC Director Mike Cummins* provided Block Grant prevention funds as one of the primary resources for UFY to fund grassroots environmental prevention activities in Lincoln County. He continues to support the work of the coalition today.

## Who Will Care For the Caretaker?

### Authentic Leadership

At the heart of authentic leadership is the courage to take risks, to care deeply, and to take action even in the midst of change and uncertainty. Helping professions often draw individuals who dare to engage their work with presence and compassion.

The more passionate we are about our work, the more vital it is that we take time to renew our own spirits — to reconnect who we are with what we do...

Too often, the demands of this

work prevent us from doing that.

### On The Big Workload ...

We've been there! We often say to one another when getting in a little too deep - "Three balloons, just three balloons!"

If you have been through SAPST and have participated in the group balloon activity, you will remember this activity is not only about working together, but also about staying focused on a small set of goals in order to avoid becoming overwhelmed and ineffective.

### Taking Time

Where do we find the time? We don't have the answer to that question, but feel it is an important component of this work - one that is overlooked on every level. We encourage conversation about enabling space and time to identify physical and emotional needs, deal with losses associated with this work, and find the resources to heal, make healthy choices, experience significant learning, and develop action plans for long-lasting change.

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*"We must learn to measure our efforts not by short-term effectiveness but by long-term faithfulness to the vision we care about."*

*— Parker J. Palmer*

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### Lincoln County Unite for Youth Coalition

Reducing Youth Substance Use for a Strong, Safe and Healthy Community!

[www.lincolncountyuniteforyouth.org](http://www.lincolncountyuniteforyouth.org)

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